

What's Love Got to Do With It?

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Summary: In a parallel universe Corny Collins and Motormouth Maybelle, had a 'thing'. Yes, indeedy, they were an item, but the journey of their love was a bumpy one, but in the end they lived happily ever after. This story tells of a love that even race can't expel. "The two laughed again as if they were meeting for the first time all over again...even if they had to start from scratch."

What's Love Got to Do With It?

The year was 1944, it was a time of romance, riots, laughter, and struggles, but our story starts at Patterson Park High School. It was graduation day and valedictorian Corny Collins was finally out on his own, he was a free man, no more chains, no more school! It was time to pursue his lifelong dream: to be on TV. Corny had always been interested in television, it was just coming out and he knew it'd be bigâ€|someday, and he wanted to be there when it happened. His first day of adulthood would be spent at the only TV station in Boston. Things were finally starting to look his way.

Meanwhile on North Avenue, a young girl of indeterminate girth sat on the street miserable. Her father had just disowned her and her boyfriend left her all in the same dayâ€|all because she had gotten knocked up. Yes, she had made a mistake, but if she didn't where would other mistakes come from. She'd never do it again, but there was no way she'd have an abortion like her parents wanted. She'd make a name for herself and support her and her baby, and she'd live her dream and survive with her amazing singing voice. She was going places; she had toâ€|if only for her baby's sake. She was headed to the television station. She had one chance, and she was gonna fight.

The two teens arrived at the studio at around the same time, Corny through the front door and Maybelle through the back, that's just how things had to be done. The studio was brightly light and painted in

stripes with tons of pastel colors in shades of green, blue, purple, and pink. The lobby was decorated beautifully with flower arrangements, records, and light refreshments. There was only one thing that took away from the beauty of the room: a thick, dark, black line slit the room in half. There were signs at the two borders: on the right "whites only" hung and "colored only" on the adjacent side. The room was busy, there were people waiting in chairs on both sides of the room, some rehearsing to themselves, some reading the newspaper, and some who lookedâ€|indifferent, as if they didn't care about the ordeal that could possibly change their entire lives. Corny was nervous. He never thought he'd get this far. What was next? He took the seat farthest from the audition room, telling himself that he needed time to think. \_What do I do?\_ Corny thought over and over to himself, but found he couldn't think. There was this buzzingâ€"no hummingâ€"noise that kept distracting him. Corny found himself entranced with the beautiful sound and without thinking (which he couldn't do anyway) he looked about the room, trying to find the source. He found that the woman next to him was the culprit. Corny couldn't do anything but stare, but when the girl made eye contact with him, he lost his cool. He began stuttering and muttering in embarrassment.

"Oh, I'm sorry. Was I bothering you?"

"No!" Corny lied quickly. "It's just that, your voice; it's beautiful."

"Thank you." The girl responded quickly hoping to end the conversation with the boy, but her efforts were in vain.

"I'm Corny. Corny Collins." He said holding out his hand for her to shake.

He saw the girl look around, noticing the eyes on them before she shook his hand. "Maybelle. Maybelle Stubbs."

Not knowing how to continue the conversation, Corny continued talking. "So what are you doing here?" He stated suavely before hitting himself on the head. Dumb question! He opened his mouth to apologize but was stopped by her laughing.

"Sorry," she said between giggles. "That's just the worst pickup line I've ever heard."

"Oh, really, well I have plenty more." He stated leaning in interested. The two hit it off immediately, it was like a match made in heaven. But their chance encounter was cut short as they were both called back for auditions. Maybelle once again leaving through the back door and Corny through the front; if things didn't change, there was no way they'd ever meet again.

Two weeks later the two were called in once again for callbacks, Corny was given a job immediately, with his great people skills and charm it was easy to do so. He'd be the host of a brand new TV show named after him: The Corny Collins Show. Maybelle on the other hand didn't have much luck, not that she was really expecting it. They told her at her audition that they wanted to hire her, and that all she had to do was upgrade her brown nappy hair into something more presentable. The girls at the salon suggested a "Big, Blonde, and Beautiful"; it was this outrageously heavy, tall and blond. It was

out there and she was completely sure that she was the only woman in Baltimore to get wrapped in that outrageous do, but she liked it. It was unique, just like everything about her. But now unlike at her audition, they told her that they didn't want a woman of her "stature" working for their studio. It was unbelievable and left Maybelle angry, but she wasn't going to stop. She stormed out the studio and went to petition the governor for her right to work at the studio, when he turned her down; she went and pressured the mayor. In the end she got what she wanted, she got on the officials' nerves so much that they nicknamed her "Motormouth", she liked the name and took it upon herself to make it her new title: Motormouth Maybelle. She was then able to work for the show for a special they called "Negro Day" which unfortunately was one day a month. It was a start and she wasn't going to complain. That very same day she went back to the studio and started her job as co-host on the Corny Collins show.

Fate just happened to be in both Corny and Maybelle's favor and the two met again. They'd be working side by side and they were definitely going to take advantage of the closeness the two would have to develop.

"Did you just kiss me?" Maybelle asked slightly in a daze.

Motormouth and Corny's secret forbidden relationship was taking a step in the positive direction. The two had been dating secretly for the past month. It was scary how much the two had in common. They had just gone on their sixth date in the past three weeks; their jobs weren't too taxing seeing as one held a microphone and smiled, while the other worked only once a month.

Corny just chuckled and pecked her lips again. "Does that answer your question?"

Sputtering and still very confused, she answered "No, no, that's not what I—" she trailed off before continuing, "Did you just stick your tongue down my throat?"

"Yes ma'am, I did." He said politely as if it were the normal thing to do.

"You do realize that there's a baby in there right?" She said gesturing to her stomach in complete and utter disbelief.

This time Corny laughed out loud. "What's that got to do with anything?"

"It's got everything to do with it. You can't be involved with me unless you're involved with him, we're a package deal."

Corny merely lifted an eyebrow before changing the subject. "C'mon, let me walk you home. It's too dark for a lady to walk home alone." He stated taking the dejected woman by the arm and walking her down the street. There was a long, tension filled silence that neither of them knew how to break. Corny opened his mouth hoping he could liven up her spirits when something hit him. "So, it's a boy?" he asked.

Maybelle turned to look at him and catching the curious glint in his

eyes, she laughed before answering him with a 'yes'.

"Have any names yet?"

"Seaweed."

"â€|like the plant?" Maybelle playfully hit him on the arm. "Why'd you pick that name?" Corny laughed.

She laughed with him, "Not sure, it was my granddaddy's name, and it'd be my way of honoring him, y'know?" He saw the sad look in her eyes and couldn't help but worry about her. She was on his mind constantlyâ€|he really liked her, maybe even love, but whether she felt the same way or not it would be impossible for the two to be together.

"This is it." Maybelle said snapping Corny out of his thoughts. It seemed they were indeed at her 'home'â€|if you could call it that. The two stood before a cheap, rundown apartment building. The thing looked as if it was about to collapse that very second. He didn't like her staying there. It didn't look safe to him, for God's sake, there were hookers blocking the entrance!

"Goodnight Corny." The independent woman said before pecking Corny on the cheek and pushing her way past the hookers and into her apartment building without even giving him time to react. Corny stood at the entrance for a while waiting for her apartment light to come on and it did, he began his long walk home. He didn't mind the walk because it gave him time to think long and hard about his future, and it was then and there that he decided that's he wouldn't be a conformist, he'd make so that they could be together some way, somehow.

-4 Months Later-

Maybelle was awakened in the middle of the night by her baby's crying. Maybelle groaned. He was only two months old, why was he such a hassle? She could already tell that he was gonna be a mamma's boy when he grew up. The young woman couldn't stand around pondering about her child anymore; she had to get ready for work. She had recently purchased an old store and was in the process of turning it into a record shopâ€|girl had to pay the bills somehowâ€|so she was still unpacking. She was upstairs in her home above the shop, and left her sleeping son in bed while she went to bathroom to do her makeup. She was appalled to find a dark purple bruise on the left side of her neck. Her face got hot. She was going to kill Corny. Absolutely no amount of makeup would cover that up, so instead of wearing her obnoxiously long hair in a bun, she wore it down in front of her shoulders successfully covering up her "bruise". He was so gonna get it laterâ€|what Motormouth didn't realize is that statement actually had two meanings. Corny got it alrightâ€|if you know what I mean.

Negro Day was turning into a huge success and Motormouth's Record Shop was open for business, but the host and owner was not feeling too well. For the past week she had been feeling dizzy and nauseous, so much that she had to take off work for a while. She had dropped Seaweed off at her mother's house, hoping that they wouldn't bear a grudge to her son. So she sat home in bed running a fever and feeling as though she was going to die. She assumed she was just sick, there was a bug going around, and she'd get better within the week, but

when she didn't get better, she began to worry. Then she started thinking about some reasons why she was feeling the way she was, and then it hit her: she was pregnant. She just had to be. At that realization, she felt a horrible stabbing sensation in the pit of her stomach. What was going on?

Maybelle didn't come back to work for a long time after that.

It was a beautiful, sunny day in Baltimore. It was the perfect day, but everything that happened that day would be the equivalent of something horrible.

"Get off me Corny." Motormouth stated irritated when he grabbed her arm. She refused to look in his eyes. Today was her first day back in over a month and she was not in the mood to deal with him, boyfriend or not. Corny pulled her aside and away from listening ears before giving her a piece of his mind.

"What the hell Mabe?! You disappear for a month and you come back to work and ignore me?" Honestly Corny was hurt. "Where were you, what happened?" His voice softened when he felt her tense in his arms, so he wasn't prepared when she spun around quickly and smacked him across the face hard with her left hand. There was an eerie silence as the two stood there, the resounding of her hit in their ears. After a long silence Motormouth spoke up.

"I lost my baby, Corny."

Another silence ensued, before corny interjected mortified and worried.

"Baby, but wait, I thoughtâ€" He started.

"But you thought nothing." She exclaimed cutting him off. "When I was at home dying inside because my babyâ€|\_our baby\_ was gone, where were you? Grinning and smiling like a damn puppet for these people!" she said gesturing to the crew in the studio. She took a deep breath, shaking as if in her last outburst she'd break out into uncontrollable sobs. "I can't see you anymore Corny. This was all a big mistake from the beginning, you, me, our babyâ€|I just can't do it anymore."

"Mabe you can't mean that."

She stopped before turning to look at him, her eyes were cold. "It's Miss Motormouth to you."

"â€|How was I supposed to knowâ€|?" Corny said to himself dejected.

-5 Months Later-

Shit. Maybelle had done a lot of stupid things in her life, but this takes the cake. Not only did she tell Corny off, but she told him she didn't want to see him again, which wasn't even remotely true. Corny though, she had to admit, was a smart boy, he kept his distance from her at work, even if he did occasionally steal a glance or two, hell, even she did. But this predicament was unexpected. She looked at her newborn baby girl in her arms and cursed again. She really didn't think she was still pregnant. She let out a heavy sigh, how does she

get herself out of this one? She was so devastated, she thought she had miscarried months beforeâ€|but it obviously wasn't the case, and now she was left with an adorable bundle of joyâ€|and one of the biggest mistakes of her life.

She walked down the steps in her building and into her very own record shop. It was popular after only having been open for a few months and since it was only a bus ride from Patterson Park High, it was always easy to find a babysitter for her daughter, Inez. In the end it really did pay to be the host of Negro Dayâ€|

Just thinking about work made her think about how stupid she was. Ugh. She hated how things were finally starting to look up and take a turn for the worse all at once.

The past five months had been hard for Corny, he felt extremely lonely and didn't know what to do with himself, but recently he had something to occupy himself. He now had to deal with a new manager; she was the perfect example of a white stereotype: Rich, white, and bratty. Personally he hated her, but he was never one to judge quickly. Who knows, she might not be the total bitch everyone knew her as. He heard that she was this year's Miss Baltimore Crabsâ€|probably because she gave everyone she met crabsâ€|nope, there was no way in hell he could respect her. She was a gold-digger and Corny really didn't appreciate it when she pestered the higher ups, so he completely went insane when she started harassing him.

"Velma, do you mind giving me a minute alone. I need to think." He'd say anything to get away from her, even for a minute.

"Would you rather be with that colored girl?" Velma stated defiantly to Corny's back. He turned around and stared at her, mortified and shocked at the same time.

"Where did you hear that?" His voice sounded calm, but his face gave him away.

"I heard your little argument a while ago. I figured it'd be the perfect blackmail for when I wanted something."

Confused, Corny looked at her before she ran up to him and pressed her lips to him. He pushed her away completely disgusted and uninterested and he told her so, before she stomped away angrily. She was a force to be reckoned with. He'd have to watch out for her in the future. He didn't realize a certain someone's presence behind him.

"Corny, I'm not here to judge you or anything," Maybelle said trying to stop him from defending himself. It was none of her business if he moved on; after all it was her fault the two weren't together. "I just want to apologize for my behavior before, oh and I wanted to let you know that you have a daughter. Her name's Inez, I just figured that since you're the father, you should know."

Not knowing how to respond, Corny said the first thing that came to mind.

"â€|Inez is such an improvement from Seaweed." Maybelle playfully hit him on the arm and laughed.

The two laughed again as if they were meeting for the first time all over again.

-16 Years Later-

Over the next sixteen years, the two star-crossed lovers began to mend the break in their relationship even if they just stayed as friends. Corny got his big break and his annual 'Miss Teenage Hairspray' competition was going to be on national TV. And that's to a fresh face on his show, Tracy Turnblad, the Corny Collins show was integrated in 1962. And Corny and Motormouth could finally stop hiding things from the world and be together once againâ€|even if they had to start from scratch.

End  
file.